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HELPLESS CRIPPLED CHILDREN AT THE MUSEUM

READERS of the BULLETIN have already learned of the visits to the Museum of crippled children in the public schools. On May 24, fourteen children so handicapped that they cannot go to the school buildings were brought to the Museum in a Fifth Avenue stage and taken about the Museum in wheel-chairs. So great was the pleasure

pathetic understanding of the needs of these children, decided to send teachers to them.

At present there are twenty-six home teachers, two volunteer teachers, and seventeen after-school home teachers giving instruction to 225 home-bound children. In spite of this extensive service, there are still 146 home-bound children requiring school instruction for whom funds are not available for home teachers. The home



SEEING THE MUSEUM FROM A WHEEL-CHAIR

of all of the Museum staff who helped in this outing for these shut-ins that we asked Dr. Adela J. Smith, Assistant Director of Physical Training in the public schools of the City, to write an account of the methods of instruction for these children, and especially of the part that the Metropolitan Museum may play in their education if the problem of transportation can be solved.

Since December, 1918, after a successful experimental study with volunteer home teachers, the Board of Education has provided home instruction for helpless crippled children of school age who, though mentally able to profit by school instruction, could not attend school owing to their physical condition. Since these children could not come to school, the Board of Education, in its wisdom and with sym-

teachers have eight pupils each upon their assignment, giving instruction in elementary school subjects three times a week, for one and one-half hour each visit. Thus a full-time teacher works six days per week.

The after-school home teachers from nearby schools are assigned to helpless children who are preparing to graduate, or to severely handicapped children residing in districts at great distances from the route of the home teacher. Each volunteer teacher who serves without compensation has one pupil.

Each of the 225 home-bound children under instruction is registered on the roll of the class of cripples in the stage district in which the child resides, or in outlying districts in the nearest school. Through the helpful coöperation of the principals of these schools, the home teacher is able to

grade her pupils in accordance with the monthly plan of grade work of the school in which the pupil is registered.

Last year, 154 children out of 173 home-bound children were promoted, a number of them completing two grades, and one pupil three grades. Of the nineteen pupils who were not promoted, several were admitted to hospitals for an indefinite period for operations, others were under quarantine, several were mentally defective, and the remainder were new pupils under instruction for less than a school term.

There were two graduates who completed their work with honors, graduating under the same conditions for the mental tests as the children in the regular graduating classes in their school district.

Besides home instruction, in case either medical or surgical treatment is needed, this is instituted either through conference with the family physician or otherwise through the special clinic for children in the hospital of the zone in which the child resides.

Through the establishment of persistent supervision of the hospital treatment through the home teachers, there has been a noticeable improvement in the physical condition of these helpless children. Last year twenty-five children were taught to walk and have been admitted to public schools in special classes.

This extension of school instruction for home-bound children has been very successful. The reports on this activity made by the teachers have been pictures of the happiness of the children and the grateful appreciation of their parents for the educational advantages provided by the Board of Education. Dull, listless, hopeless children have been changed to happy, bright, busy little folks with a new interest in life when they found they could have the same school advantages as their more fortunate brothers and sisters. The sympathetic interest of the whole neighborhood has been aroused through the work accomplished by the home teachers.

One boy, although just home from the hospital, with both lower limbs encased in plaster, completed three terms' work in one. In the June examination in arithmetic, he scored 100 per cent.

Another helplessly crippled boy had never attended school. He was taught to read by his home teacher. His mother says, "He is the happiest boy in the Bronx, since he was taught to read."

The coming of the home teacher is the sunniest hour of the day for the helpless child. One teacher through illness was unable to visit her pupil, and notice was sent to the mother. She telephoned to inquire about the teacher the next day. On the second day, the child said, "Mother, don't telephone. I am afraid they will say my teacher cannot come, and that would finish me!" One little girl said, "Oh, Mother, today I had a real teacher. It's just like hearing a fairy tale, and waking up and finding it true."

This work on the part of the Board of Education is certainly worth while when it can bring so much happiness and profit to these little home-bound children.

Arrangements have been made at the Museum for several terms for a story-hour for crippled children in public schools. Many happy visits have been made by these children, and the interesting and charming stories told by Miss Chandler have added much to the pleasure and profit of these trips to the Museum.

By way of an experiment, on May 24, a group of helpless cripples visited the Museum, and everything was provided for their comfort. Wheel-chairs awaited them at the door to convey them from room to room to what must have seemed to them like fairyland. The pleasure and interest of the children were so evident that every one felt that such visits should be part of the education of these little home-bound children. The difficulty experienced in such trips is one of transporting the children from their homes to the Museum.

Although the Fifth Avenue Coach Co. kindly donated one of their stages for the afternoon, the problem of bringing the children from their homes to some central point for the stage was a difficult matter. If direct transportation from the home of each child to the Museum could be provided, it would be possible to increase the number of children who could profit by a happy afternoon visit to see the wonderful

pictures and other treasures in one of the most interesting museums in the world.

ADELA J. SMITH.

A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY MANUSCRIPT

THE Museum has lately bought a thirteenth-century manuscript, certain leaves from which are now temporarily shown in Gallery 33. It is a Psalter in Latin, beginning with the first Psalm and continuing, with certain excisions where initial letters and page decorations have been cut out, up to the eightieth. The Psalter consists of forty-nine leaves of vellum, $11\frac{1}{3}$ inches high and $8\frac{1}{8}$ inches wide, and is preceded by a much mutilated Calendar of six leaves of the same size. There are also three full-page illuminations, each with two scenes from the Passion of Christ, evidently once a part of the Psalter. Judging from its similarity in many points to the famous Psalter of Saint Louis in the Bibliothèque Nationale, known to have been executed about 1265, it is conjectured that our Psalter is also of that date and, like the other, is the work of Parisian craftsmen. The Calendar is perhaps somewhat later, and as it contains a preponderance of British saints, it can be taken for granted that its workmanship is English.¹ The execution of the Calendar, excellent enough by itself (particularly as regards the remarkable marginal drawing of the Martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul on one of the pages now shown), appears crude in comparison with the far superior beauty of the Psalter and the three illuminations. These indeed represent Gothic writing and illuminating at its highest point. They are of the time when the hieratic, symbolical

style, inherited from the twelfth century, had become imbued and vitalized by the new spirit of naturalism, and had not yet lost its grandeur in the pursuit of realistic trivialities and emotionalism.

The main activity of the Gothic painter was the making of stained glass windows—a craft in which the finished work is separated from the artist's conception by a long and complicated process. The momentary mood and enthusiasm of the artist, which found such ready expression in the Italian frescoes of the fourteenth century, could have little or no result on the completed window. In them all had to be calculated beforehand, and the collaboration of many hands relied on. Each epoch, however, finds the art that fits its needs, and the Gothic ideal of beautiful painting was manifested in the windows. Even the illuminator, whose process allowed so much greater freedom, followed the conventions and handling which the medium of stained glass imposed. The fact is apparent in our illuminations. They are as like the windows as the altogether different materials allow—being painted in pure, flat colors of only half a dozen varieties, and outlined and detailed with a line that is as precise and calligraphic as though drawn on glass.

An art like stained glass, being the work of several rather than of one, can only flourish when inspiration is diffused, when genius belongs to the race as a whole rather than to particular individuals. This was distinctly the case in thirteenth-century France. Art was then anonymous, personalities did not emerge from the general effort of the time, similar developments seemed to take form spontaneously in different places. The Gothic artist copied what some one else had done as willingly as he invented a thing of his own. And the production of such a period, to which contemporaries and previous generations overwhelmingly contribute, has peculiar qualities—a dignity, a harmony, a universality, which distinguish it from work more or less subject to personal caprice.

Thus the illuminations which this article calls attention to differ from all the other pictures and drawings of our collection, though many analogous works may be

¹The British saints are Saints Thomas à Becket, Cuthbert, Alphege, George (the Patron of England), Dunstan, Aldhelm, Augustine of Canterbury, Edward (King of Wessex), Botolph, Alban, Swithin, Kenelm, Edward the Confessor, Edmund of Canterbury, Edmund (King), Sampson, and Edith. In one of the remaining illustrations is an heraldic shield which, according to R. T. Nichol, may be emblazoned—silver, 2 chevrons gules and is almost certainly that of Sir Ralph Grendon of Grendon, Warwickshire, and Shenstone, Staffordshire, who fought in the Scottish wars of Edward I.